Original research article

Conceptual tools for effective school administration, factors affecting job design

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Abstract: The article focuses on conceptual factors that contribute to the formation of the school as an exemplary educational institution. The questions about effective administration and leadership are answered by analyzing the findings and insights of educational theorists. What are the moral criteria of leadership and the ambiguous and complex decision-making process? How the insights from important work design theories correlate with important conceptual approaches to school management. An important emphasis is placed on diversity and the concept of the school microcosm: how effective administration can increase the self-efficacy of teachers, which in turn always positively affects the academic performance of students. The scientific novelty of the article discusses the views of heads of public schools in Georgia, their subjective experiences, and recommendations, together with the theoretical and conceptual tools of school management. Through the phenomenological analysis conducted with school leaders in Georgia, we will get to know the professional skills and strategies that lead to the strengthening of the school's pulse and focusing on the so-called "school of the future" model.

Keywords: effective administration; successful leader; responsibility

1. Introduction

Effective school administration in the new millennium involves overcoming cognitive, cultural, legal, racial, religious, linguistic, and other "boundaries" so that the school leader can provide a school environment that is equitable, tailored to the interests and needs of students, and focused on success. There is great interest in educational leadership in the early part of the 21st century. "This is because of the widespread belief that the quality of leadership makes a significant difference to schools and students"[1].

What does effective school administration and leadership entail? What kind of leader should a successful leader be? In order to answer these and similar questions, a lot of research has been conducted, and many articles and works have been written, but unfortunately, the concept, due to its multi-faceted function, still remains vague. The reason is somewhat explainable: on the one hand, leadership involves having all the skills for leadership and their relevant use, and on the other hand, according to Bennis[2], it is difficult to react quickly and be ready for such events "that you could never imagine" at the same time[2].

The leader's goals and activities should be focused on increasing the effectiveness of the team's work and achieving effective results. A good leader, with his own behavior, simulates the realization of opportunities and increases the self-efficacy of each team member.

2. Materials and methods

According to the situational theory of leadership (Hersey-Blanchard), there is no best or private style of leadership or personal characteristics and qualities of leadership that are equally appropriate for all situations[3]. The theory gives great importance to the adaptability of the leader and his flexibility. According to the situational theory of leadership, the most effective leaders are those who can adapt their style to the situation and look for cues such as the type of task, the nature of the team, and other factors that may contribute to getting things done. This opinion is confirmed in his studies by the leading theorist Fred Fiedler, who introduced the approach of the situational leadership model because it is based on the interactive dynamics of three variables: effective leadership depends on personal qualities, style, and action based on the needs of the situation.

House and Mitchell[4] describe four leadership styles:
- Facilitative leadership: creating a friendly work environment and taking into account the needs of colleagues.
- Commanding leadership: giving orders is characteristic of this type of leader. He himself plans what type of work should be done by the team members and when.
- Participative leadership: the leader listens to the opinions of colleagues and takes them into account.
- Achievement-oriented leadership: The leader has high expectations of team members and is focused on increasing the self-efficacy of both team members and himself.

One of the determining factors of a leader's successful performance is the creation of motivation through effective communication. In this case, his ability as a communicator to establish and manage communication with colleagues is significant. According to Covey, in order to be a successful leader, you must be able to listen to other people. Problems in an educational institution are often related to improperly motivated teachers. A leader must study the situation and determine how to communicate at different levels. Cooper believes that recognizing the success of colleagues is of great importance in terms of motivating others. Therefore, it is crucial that the leader take the time to celebrate the contribution of each employee to the organization.

It is important to understand one very important aspect: culture is not the same as race, nation, ethnicity, or origin. All these are constituent parts of culture, although culture is determined by many other factors. Be aware that your communication style may be different from the communication style of other people who look exactly like you. And sometimes your communication style matches the communication style of people who are visually quite different from you. The bottom line is to refrain from jumping to conclusions, be patient, and always remember that everyone is an individual[5].

In the wake of trying to understand and put these theories into practice, it is important to think forever to strengthen the pulse of the school. This can be achieved by managing the school's internal and external mechanisms in such a way as to provide an arena for:

- To increase unity, closeness, and collegiality between departments. It is significant to turn the departments into a professional society, where everyone really cares about each other and each other's development.
- Establishing a harmonious relationship between teachers and students. For this, it is important that teachers choose a facilitator role instead of a directive teaching style and support more student involvement and initiatives.
- A loyal parent cohort is the main artillery that strengthens the pulse of the school. First of all, it is most important to gain trust among parents, which can be achieved by listening to them, showing patience, and optimally considering their initiatives, wishes, and ideas.
- Establishing and maintaining a successful relationship with the community.

Over the years, there have been attempts to simplify the work. However, many researchers have hypothesized that the simplification of work may lead to possible boredom and demotivation towards the tasks to be performed. Other practices that emerged as motivational antidotes to simplified jobs are job enlargement, the expansion of the content of jobs by including additional tasks, and job rotation[6]. Based on the job enrichment approach and other motivational theories[7,8], built their Job Characteristics Model (JCM). The JCM, the dominant motivational model of work design, consists of five core job characteristics and proposes that each of these characteristics contributes to personal and work outcomes. The core job dimensions of skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and job-based feedback are meant to contribute to three psychological states of employees that must be present for internally motivated work behavior to develop: experienced meaningfulness of the work, feeling responsible for work outcomes, and understanding the results of their work efforts[9].

3. Results

In order to better study the process of effective administration of school leadership, we considered it important to study the specifics of the work of principals of public and private schools in Georgia as leaders. The qualitative and quantitative research method used in the research is phenomenological analysis, with the help of which we studied the subjective experiences of the principals of public and private schools in Georgia.

In order to find out what determines the success of school principals in Georgia, what skills help school leaders manage staff better, and what approaches and activities are used to increase the motivation of staff, teachers, and the school community in general, we interviewed the principals of 24 successful schools in Georgia. All of the 24 leaders think that the director's success is represented by leadership skills and high professionalism. Of these, 20 principals believe that team management skills and effective communication skills are crucial for effective staff management. The remaining four believe that the ability to listen and solve problems is one of the most important strategies for effective staff management.

As for what they do to increase the motivation of teachers and the school community, 70% of the surveyed principals regulate it by allocating money from the school budget. The remaining 30% supports the participation of students and teachers at conferences and webinars.

When asked what strategy you use to make your school a successful and competitive institution, the majority of principals (22 principals) agree on the following: experience sharing, exchange, and joint

projects significantly contribute to the formation of the school as a competitive institution. The rest, depending on the specifics of the school, mention the promotion of civil integration and full inclusive education.

Here we share with you the summary results and recommendations of the survey of 24 interviewed school principals:

To the question: What determines the success of the school director? We heard these answers from successful leaders of Georgian public schools:

Leadership skills, high professionalism, openness to innovations, implementation of democratic management principles in school management, collaborative management style, possession of modern trends in world educational policy in both management and teaching-learning direction. Dedication to work, purposefulness, acceptance of innovations, and constant concern for development.

Which skill helps you manage staff effectively? The directors' answers are as follows:
Effective communication, problem-solving, rational decision making, and team management skills, as well as empathy and creativity. The ability of justice and friendly cooperation.

What activities do you implement to increase the motivation of teachers and students?

As we learned from the responses of the school leaders, they mainly use the following events and activities to increase motivation:

Providing need-based in-service training, supporting school projects from the school budget, exchange programs with friendly schools abroad, cooperation with partner schools, universities, governmental and non-governmental organizations, joint projects and programs, conferences, workshops, and webinars. Encouraging participation in local and international training, competitions, and Olympiads and caring for an inclusive and cooperative educational environment. Your own example is an important part of motivation when starting any initiative.

For us, the answer to the question about what they advise novice principals to do to manage the school effectively was significant.

A novice director should apply a collaborative management style, establish effective communication with employees, and make rational decisions based on needs while adhering to the principles of participatory democracy. Above all, they must love their work. Be impartial and take care of any employee as you would yourself.

To the question, depending on the interests and needs of the school, what strategies do you apply to make your institution an exemplary educational institution? The answers of the leaders are as follows:
Based on the specifics of the school, the school culture is directed towards the introduction of tolerance, civil integration, human rights and democratic values, intercultural dialogue, and perfection of the inclusive environment. Close cooperation is carried out with the embassies of different countries represented in the country, diasporas, governmental and non-governmental organizations. Cooperation with educational institutions of different countries of the world, exchange programs, experience sharing, and joint projects are actively underway. When the employee is in a calm and

friendly environment, in the form of a director, he has a caring supervisor and has the necessary resources to do the job, all other strategies are required at the art level.

4. Discussion

Thus, in this paper, we investigated the modern theoretical conceptual tools of school management and, at the same time, found out what approaches and activities are actually preferred by outstanding school principals in Georgia. We discussed their views, subjective experiences, and recommendations.

5. Conclusion

We believe that in most cases, the generalization of the given recommendations or approaches is quite acceptable for the further development of school education in Georgia. Their basis, the starting point, is mainly the consolidated visions of the concepts of upbringing and education developed by mankind over the centuries in the educational direction[10,11]. That is why the given recommendations have a universal character, and their high-quality implementation is necessary for the further development of school education (as a field) in our country. At the same time, from the point of view of school management, it is of great importance to take into account the cultural characteristics that have been formed over the millennia as a result of the mutual influence and various ethnographic, ethnological, traditional, religious, social, or political elements in the geographical area where the state of Georgia is located today and the people living in this area in an ethnocultural society[12]. The development of information and communication technologies led to the further acceleration of the trend of mutual convergence of educational policies IN different states[13]. Observation of the education, teaching-learning process, both on a global and local scale, gives the basis for making the following conclusion: in the era of globalization, the general education school, as the most important segment of education, can be effectively managed only in the conditions of peaceful compatibility of public and individual ethno-cultural values[14]. Helping to create such an environment should be the main direction and goal of the school leader's work. If, from this point of view, his activities are effective, then he, as a school leader, fully meets the modern requirements before him, and as a professional, he is ready to respond adequately to the ever-increasing and renewing challenges.

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Conflict of interest

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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